

MINEHEAD URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

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R E P O R T

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR

1963

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The Registrar General's figure for the population of the town is 7,520 this being the same as for 1962. It is probable that during the summer holidays this figure is more than doubled. In this respect it is difficult to estimate the seasonal increase since the inception of Butlin's Minehead Holiday Camp. This varies from week to week and we have no constant population from its opening in May and closing in September. Its administration has been satisfactory during the season under discussion. The Medical Clinic, which is responsible for the health of the Camp has not notified any complaints.

WATER SUPPLY

After many years, the administration of the water supply has been taken over by the Water Board. The quality of the water is still, however, within our purview and the usual tests are taken periodically. Any deficiency arising therein would be taken up with the Water Board to our satisfaction.

There was delay in the final handing over of the Hopcott Reservoir which was finally completed in August of the year in question. The delivery of the water is continued as heretofore, but is now no longer under your jurisdiction.

The accompanying table of the examination of specimens taken from widely different parts of the supply demonstrates its excellence bacteriologically and chemically.

RAW WATER				TREATED AFTER GOING INTO SUPPLY			
Bacteriological		Chemical		Bacteriological		Chemical	
Satis- factory	Unsatis- factory	Satis- factory	Unsatis- factory	Satis- factory	Unsatis- factory	Satis- factory	Unsatis- factory
30	11	6	-	33	1	-	-

The water is supplied to the public direct from the mains, either direct to the houses or by means of standpipes. It will be seen from the accompanying table the manner of its distribution.

Number of Dwelling Houses	DIRECT TO THE HOUSES			BY MEANS OF STANDPIPES		
	Public	Water Companies	Private	Public	Water Companies	Private
	2,718	-	8	-	-	-

SWIMMING POOLS

There are three in number; the Minehead Swimming Pool which is privately owned and is filled with sea water, two which are the property of the Holiday Camp and are filled with fresh water from the Camp supply. The treatment adopted to maintain their purity is the same in all cases, that is re-circulation, filtration and automatic chlorination.

To ensure that the quality of the water is maintained, samples are taken frequently. These ensure that the degree of chlorination is maintained and there is no trace of bacterial infection. Frequent testing indicated that in all the pools a safe bathing water was maintained. The filtration and chlorination plants are under skilled management and the Engineer is available the whole of the time the baths are in operation. The efficiency of the management of the pools has at no time given rise to anxiety.

The Public Health Inspector is in constant touch with the Holiday Camp and his reports are satisfactory with regard to all aspects of its administration.

Medical and surgical casualties are dealt with adequately, and to our satisfaction, by qualified members of the medical profession.

SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE

These matters have occupied your attention now for some years, but it is possible that if the nettle had been grasped at its inception much money might have been saved thereby. Even in the last three years building costs have gone up by leaps and bounds, yet in spite of this many more local authorities are putting their houses in order in the matter of inadequate drainage.

The question is no longer "shall we tackle the problem of drainage", but rather "how can we tackle the said problem in the most speedy, efficient and economical way".

You have approved in principle a scheme which meets all requirements, but it will require time as well as the other essentials. By carrying out the scheme in stages it is your plan to spread the total effort over a period of time which will enable the most urgent needs to be dealt with first; thus flooding and beach pollution would possibly head the list.

For undertakings of such magnitude as the one before you, money is not forthcoming easily either from Ministerial or County level, in fact the answers to humble appeals for financial assistance in either grants or loans could be epitomised in the words - God helps those that help themselves. But, remains the fact Minehead is too valuable and lovely a gem to be allowed to lose its lustre and future prosperity for want of present help.

Let us have criticism by all means, and there might be considerable of this commodity, but let it be purposive for the good of Minehead and posterity. One thing is certain, you have the good will of everyone in your difficult task.

PUBLIC CLEANSING

This is carried out by the employees of the Council using two special motor vehicles. The collections are made weekly. Trade refuse is removed under a scheme by which a charge is made of 6d. a bin. Alternatively the trader may deliver his own refuse at the tip.

The refuse thus received at the tip is spread and covered with available soil and packed and levelled; this to prevent annoyance to the surrounding locality.

The tip itself is situated at the western end of Quay West. A very considerable area of waste land has been treated in this manner and has raised this to several feet above beach level.


I drew attention to this state of affairs in my last report with these words "the available area that has been dealt with in this manner is now coming to an end and either another site for the tip or another method of dealing with waste garbage must be found". Since I wrote those words you have had this matter frequently before you for discussion.

The alternative of incineration received your attention, and after exhaustive consideration it was definitely ruled out. The question of removing the tip to another site is still before you, but the decision has not been reached in the period covered by this report.

In my visits to the tip I have not found that it grows more beautiful, but becomes more in keeping with the derelict appearance of the gas holders and ovens which go to make up the unsightly collection of buildings known as the old Gas Works.

There are other sites available, but doubtless there are reasons, financial or otherwise, which stand in the way. It is within my province as Medical Officer of Health to stress the point that Minehead beautiful is a powerful factor towards good health which should not be neglected in a health resort, but Minehead disfigured by unpleasant monuments of its essential, but unlovely growth, is an argument in the other direction.

It should be kept in mind that Minehead is a residential health resort as well as a seasonal Holiday Camp. It may well be that opportunity will not always wait upon your wishes, and the possibilities which lie beyond Quay West will be lost. The residents are always with us and should be a first charge on our amenities.



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MEAT AND OTHER FOODS

Meat is prepared for human food at the slaughterhouse from where it is distributed locally. So far as it is practical, all animals are inspected before slaughter, and all carcasses and offal are inspected in accordance with instructions laid down in Memorandum 62 Foods, and appropriate action taken when required.

All places where food is prepared, etc., including the slaughterhouse, shops, stalls and vehicles, are inspected from time to time and action taken as required. Generally the cleanliness of these establishments and vehicles is satisfactory.

A list of premises used in this context, in alphabetical order follows:-

Bakehouses	1	Fishmongers	4
Bakers' Shops	3	Fried Fish Shops	2
Butchers	8	Fruiterers and	
Cafes	18	Greengrocers	9
Canteens	2	Grocers	31
Chemists	5	Hostels	1
Church Halls	6	Hotels with	
Clubs, etc....	8	Restaurants	11
Dairies	1	Hotels, Residential	43
Dairy Shops... ..	3	Licensed Premises	9
		Pie Factory	1
		Restaurants	6

The number of inspections given to these premises was 775 during the year.

The care, cleanliness and compliance with the Food Hygiene Regulations of these premises was found to be satisfactory.

MEAT INSPECTION, 1963

CARCASSES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED

Carcasses and Offal inspected and condemned in whole or in part during year:-

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs	Horses
Number killed (if known)	359	-	31	1,821	811	-
Number Inspected	359	-	31	1,821	811	-
<u>All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci</u>						
Whole carcasses condemned	-	-	-	-	1	-
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	13	-	-	10	24	-
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis and cysticerci	3.6	-	-	0.5	3.0	-
<u>Tuberculosis only</u>						
Whole carcasses condemned	-	-	-	-	1	-
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	-	-	-	-	5	-
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	-	-	-	-	0.7	-

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs	Horses
<u>Cysticercosis</u>						
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	1	-	-	-	-	-
Carcases submitted to treat- ment by refrigeration	1	-	-	-	-	-
Generalised and totally condemned	-	-	-	-	-	-
Weight of meat condemned (in lbs.) for:-						
(a) Tuberculosis	259	-	-	-	-	-
(b) Cysticercosis	45	-	-	-	-	-
(c) Other	470	-	-	-	-	-
Total (in lbs.) condemned	729	-	-	-	-	-

PART VIII OF THE ACT

Outwork

Nature of work	No. of out-workers in August List required by section 110(1)(c)	No. of cases of default in sending lists to the Council	No. of prosecu- tions for failure to supply lists	No. of instances of work in unwhole- some premises	Notices served	Prose- cutions
Wearing) Making apparel } etc.	2	-	-	-	-	-
} Cleaning } and } Washing	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	2	-	-	-	-	-

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

The number of notifiable diseases for the year was 25, compared with 22 for 1962. The cases notified were all of a mild type and there were no deaths associated with them.

Cases requiring institutional treatment are sent to Taunton Isolation Hospital.

Disinfection of premises after infectious diseases is carried out by the Local Authority, also after cases of an unhygienic nature on receipt of a written request from the General Practitioner in attendance.

TUBERCULOSIS

There were two cases of Tuberculosis notified; there were 2 deaths.

HOSPITAL

The Minehead and West Somerset Hospital is entirely administered by the Bridgwater, Minehead and Butleigh Management Committee.

Local representation is supplied by the House Committee. This Committee is appointed by the Committee of Management from information supplied to it. It is empowered to make recommendations on the supervision and welfare of the Institution and its occupants to the Committee of Management. The Committee of Management is represented on the House Committee by three of its members.

MILK

The milk supply during the year was satisfactorily maintained. Samples were taken from time to time by the County Milk Sampling Officers.

- (a) The total number of Registered Distributors was five.
- (b) The total number of Registered Dairy Premises (other than Dairy Farms) was one.

MANUFACTURE OF ICE CREAM

The regulations governing this manufacture and the requirements implicit in them have tended to restrict the preparation of ice cream to the large wholesale houses. The distributors find it more profitable to purchase their ice cream in bulk.

The number of premises registered for:-

Manufacture and Retail	...	...	8
Manufacture only	...	...	0
Retail only	...	...	50

HOUSING

The total number of houses is 2,726. During the year there were no houses erected by the Local Authority; twenty three were erected by Private Enterprise.

The total number of applicants for Council Houses at the end of the year was 115.

There was no case of overcrowding.

Number of Post-War Houses erected from 1st April 1945 to 31st December, 1963			Housing Programme for 1964	
By Local Authority	By Private Enterprise		For slum clearance	For other purposes
255	268		-	-
No. of permanent dwellings in District as at 31.12.62 (a)	Gained from conversions and erected during 1963 (b)	Total (a) + (b)	Less houses demolished closed, etc. during year	No. of permanent dwellings in district as at 31.12.63
				L.A. P.E.
L.A. 359	-	359	-	359 -
P.E. 2,339	28	2,367	-	- 2,367
Totals 2,698	28	2,726	-	2,726

OLD PEOPLE'S DWELLINGS

Number erected to 31.12.63		Number in course of erection	
With County Council Aid	Without County Council Aid	With County Council Aid	Without County Council Aid
-	40 (included in Post-War houses above)	-	-

IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

(a) Discretionary

Number of applications and houses dealt with by Local Authority during year:-

Received		Approved	
Applications	No. of Dwellings	Applications	No. of Dwellings
3	3	3	3

Number of applications approved in respect of owner/occupiers during the year:- 3.

Average cost per dwelling approved during year £744

Amount of grant payable by Local Authority £368

Number of Dwellings completed during year ... 4

(b) Standard

1. Number of applications (a) Received ... 14

(b) Approved ... 10

2. Number of houses where Standard Amenities have been provided ... 9

NOTE: Number of applications approved in respect of owner/occupiers during year ... 8

FACTORIES ACT, 1937 TO 1959

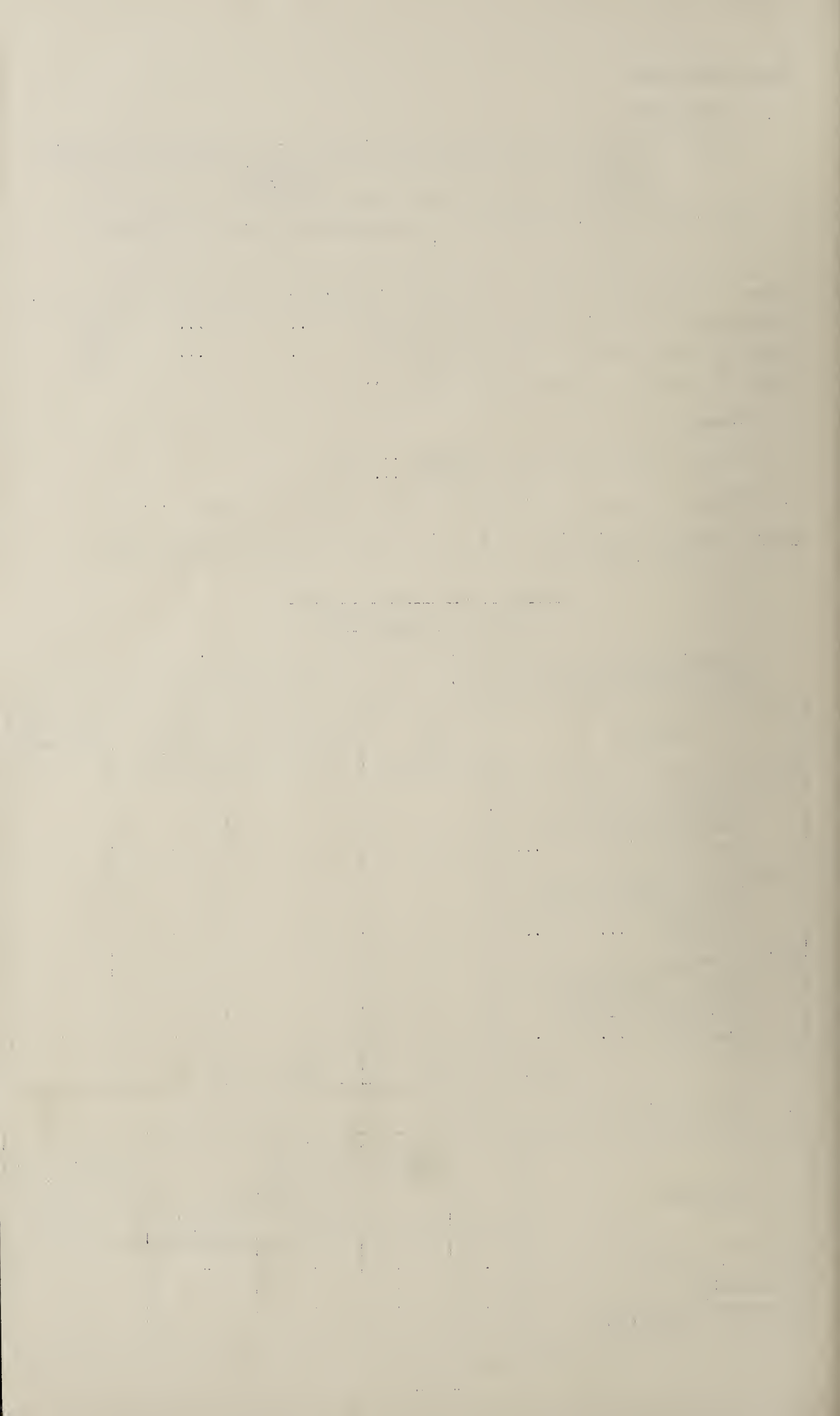
PART I OF THE ACT

1. Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Public Health Inspector).

Premises	Number on Register	Inspections	Number of Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities ...	9	9	-	-
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	51	90	-	-
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers premises	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	60	99	-	-

2. Cases in which defects were found:-

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred		
			To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness	-	-	-	-	-
Overcrowding	-	-	-	-	-
Unreasonable temperature	-	-	-	-	-
Inadequate ventilation	-	-	-	-	-



Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred		
			To.H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Ineffective drainage of floors	-	-	-	-	-
Sanitary Conveniences:					
(a) Insufficient	-	-	-	-	-
(b) Unsuitable or defective	-	-	-	-	-
(c) Not separate for sexes	-	-	-	-	-
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Out-work)	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	-	-	-	-	-

AMBULANCE TRANSPORT

At the present time I have received no definite information from the County Council concerning this branch of the Health Service. The following paragraphs indicate the present status in quo adumbrated in my last report.

Notification has been given by the St. John Ambulance Brigade of the termination of the agency between the Brigade and the Somerset County Council, with effect from the 31st March, 1964. On that date also, the Brigade have requested that the tenancy of the premises at the Ambulance Station in North Road, by the Somerset County Council, be terminated, the accommodation being required by the Brigade for teaching and training purposes, and for the garaging of Brigade Ambulances used in the Minehead area. It is understood that the Somerset County Council Ambulance station will be temporarily housed in premises in Townsend Road, adjacent to the Roman Catholic Church. No information regarding this move has yet been received from the Somerset County Council, but at the time of report the Health Service Ambulances are operating from that site.

Some concern is felt regarding certain categories of patients as the Health Service Ambulance crews do not include female Nursing attendants. The Brigade will endeavour to supply these for the Somerset County Council when it is considered necessary by a Hospital, or a patient's own doctor, but it must be appreciated that under the group control of Somerset County Council vehicles from Taunton there is no guarantee that a voluntary nurse accompanying a patient can return to her base within the normal time limits for a journey.

The Brigade will continue to provide transport for patients whose journeys are not covered by the Health Service. Their vehicles and trained men and women will continue to serve the public on all occasions when their services are required, and the St. John Headquarters in North Road will have expanded facilities for the teaching and training of the public in First Aid, Home Nursing, Hygiene and kindred subjects, and for the provision of articles required for all care of patients in their own homes.

The following information of the extent of work done by the Ambulance Service based on the St. John Minehead Headquarters indicates the extent, but not the details of the work performed:-

Miles travelled	...	...	67,983
Patients carried	...	...	8,155

CLINICS

Clinics, with the exception of Infant Welfare, are held at the Minehead and West Somerset Hospital.

VITAL STATISTICS

	Total	M.	F.
Live Births - Legitimate ...	84	53	31
Illegitimate ...	7	2	5
Live Birth Rate per 1,000 of the population ...	12.1.		
Illegitimate Live Births (per cent of total live births) ...	7.7%		
Stillbirths ...	1		
Stillbirths Rate per 1,000 total live and stillbirths ...	10.87		
Total live and stillbirths ...	92		
Infant Deaths (deaths under one year) ...	0		

	Total	M.	F.
<u>Deaths</u>	146	64	82

Death Rate per 1,000 of the estimated population ... 19.41

An analysis of the vital statistics shows that the total deaths registered were 146; in 1962 the figure was 156.

The total of live births was 91, compared with 93 the previous year.

With regard to the deaths occurring in age groups, one occurred between 35 and 45; two between 45 and 55; thirteen between 55 and 65; twenty six between 65 and 75; and 104 over the age of 75. Eleven occurred over the age of 90.

Consideration of the causes of deaths shows that 89 deaths resulted from diseases of the circulatory system; the figure for the previous year being 96.

Of these 89 deaths, lesions of the coronary vessels of the heart number 31 and vascular lesions of the nervous system 29. There were 9 deaths due to respiratory disease. The total number of deaths from malignant diseases was 24, compared with 22 in 1962.

OPEN SPACES

It is with pleasure that I come to the open spaces of Minehead and indeed of most country towns. Visitors and residents alike speak enthusiastically of the happy effect of the colourful and graceful gardens, large and small, private and public, that take the eye almost everywhere you go. This is not achieved without thought and knowledge of the open spaces. To a lover of the country to see an open space is to stir a desire to live within a garden or an open space of wind and sunshine, or trees and shady walks, but the open spaces have to be bought and paid for in one way and another.

It is the misfortune of so many places to have grown up without this legacy, or where the growth of building has strangled the open spaces before it was realised that it had happened. In Minehead, at its present growth, we are fortunate in this respect, in our walks and gardens the sea on one hand and the natural beauty of the hinterland on the other, but the growth of the town continues and it is your privilege to guard these precious spaces from invasion and spoliation.

Your Surveyor and his Executive, Mr. D.W. Holmes, the Parks Superintendent, are your appointed representatives in this matter. Minehead is their testimonial for their appointment, and you would have difficulty in finding a better team, but it is to be remembered that the natural beauty is there as our heritage, but its maintenance is again your privilege.

SUMMARY OF ABOVE REPORT

As will be seen from consideration of the various items making up this report the health of the town remains on the whole satisfactory.

The transfer of the water supply to the management and care of the Water Board has relieved you of any further responsibility in this direction. However, it is still our duty to see that the quality and purity of the water is maintained.

Sewerage. You will see that this problem is still sub judice.

Foods. Your Public Health Inspector reports satisfactorily on these matters.

Housing. This is, as usual, a matter of the consideration of figures showing the trend of this problem.

Factories. Reports on this item are satisfactory.

Ambulance Transport Service. This is dealt with at length earlier in the report.

Refuse Disposal. The treatment of the land beyond Quay West would doubtless be available for development when the ultimate treatment of the waste garbage tip is settled.

In conclusion I should like to congratulate all those who have helped in any way, be it large or small, to bring Minehead through the troublous times that have beset the Council during the period under discussion.

To the Members of the Council I extend my thanks for their help in such matters as I have had occasion to bring to their notice.

To my colleagues in your service I would extend my congratulations on their achievements in a difficult year.

To your Clerk, Mr. Green, I tender my thanks and appreciation for his kindness and courtesy in all those matters which have brought us together.

W. BAIN, M.B., B.S., Lond.,

Medical Officer of Health,

Brook House, Minehead.

Telephone: Minehead 19.

May, 1964.

